

Buckden Parish Council

Flood Advisory Group.

Minutes of Meeting 19.01.2024

Present: John Thelwall (chair), Anne Howell Jones, Liz Olding, Linda Upham.

Apologies: Gordon Wyatt

1. **Scott Kitson:** JT informed the Group that Scott Kitson, who lives on Taylors Lane has volunteered to be a flood warden, but could not be present as he works full time and he had not been able to arrange time off work at short notice.
2. **Storm Henk:** The meeting reviewed the flooding that had happened in Taylors Lane and Mill Road when Storm Henk hit. The flood equipment had been distributed and was very useful, particularly the pumps. The Group acknowledged the hard work of the many people who had turned out and helped the householders. Mill Road was badly flooded down at the Marina and the river, but there are no practical steps the Group can take to alleviate this. It is a matter for the river authority and County Council.
3. **Flood Action Plan** – carry forward.
4. **Flood Wardens:** apart from Scott Kitson there had been no more volunteers. We just have to keep getting the message out there.
5. **Access to the equipment store and replenishment of equipment:** JT reported he had recovered most of the equipment, including the 2 pumps. We are one high vis jacket and 2 brooms short. We may also be one set of drain rods short. JT will try to track these down over the weekend.

JT reported that the CC is offering to replenish equipment and there is a grant of up to £500 available. It was agreed to order 4 Flood signs and frames, a storage box, 2 more high vis jackets and 4 more brooms.

It was agreed to buy 2 new pumps which could be placed in peoples' houses, one in Taylors Lane and one with Liz Olding so that in the case of an emergency, at least one pump would be immediately

available. It was also agreed to buy new rot proof sand bags and filler and impermeable membrane that can be made available and cut to size to enable householders to protect their doors. (All purchases subject to budget being available – JT to check.)

GW had suggested buying a small generator and floodlight but it was felt this would be too heavy and cumbersome. It would need fuel storing and we do not have proper facilities for this.

6. **LLFA meeting:** JT reported on the LLFA meeting on 17th Jan. He and AH-J agreed that Hilary Tandy at the LLFA is really on top of her game and very helpful. The main point of interest is that the CC is continuing investigation into alleviating and controlling the flow in Taylors Brook. There will be surveys and at least one meeting in March/April this year to obtain community input and enable Councillors to understand what the problems are and how they might be resolved.

There is a problem with the culvert under the High Street as it would seem that although it flows well, the pipe is just not big enough to take a very high volume of flow, such as was caused by Storm Henk. The only solution is to enlarge the pipe but that would cost £100,000s and there is no budget for it. Because only 28 houses in Cambridgeshire were flooded during Storm Henk, there is no government funding available for further flood prevention measures. The threshold is 50 houses in a county being flooded.

7. **AOB** – It was agreed to keep pressing HDC to give notice of when drain cleaning trucks would be sent round and to set out bollards the night before to stop people parking over drains that are going to be cleaned.

The state of ditches around the village was discussed. It was agreed to ask the Highways Group and walkers to note the state of ditches and report them to the Clerk, so that we can find out who the responsible owners of badly maintained ditches are and try to bring pressure to bear to get them to maintain them.

A H-J will speak to Martin (handyman) about Jessamine House Farm that was nearly flooded in Storm Henk. She will check which ditches need maintenance. It is believed these belong to the Church

Commissioners and are their responsibility to maintain. We can write to Savills to ask them to take appropriate action, although it is believed that the land is tenanted so the Church Commissioners may try to pass liability to the tenant.

Next Meeting: No date was set, but it is suggested it is in late February. It was thought that meeting at 6.00 p.m. might be an easier time.